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Shutout for Huskies
Huskies #14 Charlie Fink scores the second goal of last Tuesday's game against the Mississauga Chargers at the SG Nesbitt Memorial Arena. The Huskies dominated the game, winning 6-0. /TIM YANO Special to the *Echo*

County taps the brakes on thoroughfare

JAMES MATTHEWS
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Haliburton County will reduce the speed limit on a section of County Road 3 to improve motorist safety.

The speed limit along part of County Road 3 starting at 370-metres south of Minnicock Lake Road to about 2,385-metres north will be lowered to 60 kilometres per hour.

Council heard during its regular meeting Feb. 14 that there have been an increasing number of collisions and a history of road safety concerns along that piece of road involving vehicles turning in and out of private entrances and the public intersection.

Sylvin Cloutier, the county's deputy director of public works, said the collisions were often caused by excessive speeds, site line visibility, and low reaction time to maneuver safely at the entrances and intersection.

see SPEED page 2

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STR rules complicates lives, says operator

JAMES MATTHEWS

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

People do whatever they can to get through the curveballs that life throws at them.

Sometimes doing whatever you can includes putting your Highlands East area cottage up for rent to short-term visitors. But there are aspects of the proposed bylaw to regulate Haliburton County short-term rentals (STR) that will further complicate life.

Lisa Watson told township council when it met Feb. 13 that her family had visited the region for decades until they finally bought their own property with two cottages and a bunkie. But then the economy tanked and interest rates rose.

Interest rates continued to rise until they had skyrocketed. And it was about that time when Watson became the primary caregiver of her elderly father who lives with Parkinson's.

Those circumstances made visits to the cottage difficult. But that didn't slow the mortgage payments made cumbersome by high interest rates.

"With a financial pinch and empty cottage, I made a very tough but sensible decision," she said. "I was going to start renting it when I wasn't able to make it up."

Watson said she's a responsible host who vets possible renters to weed out rowdy people who would prove disruptive to her cottage neighbours.

"If it isn't the right fit, we decline the request," Watson said.

She's met many fine people who have become friends over the years, she said.

"When the new bylaw is passed, it seems we may and others will have to close our doors to rentals," she said. "I will be forced to decide to keep Dad at home for the last few years or keep my dream property where I want to retire."

There will be costs associated with the proposed bylaw that would prohibit operators, she said. The current draft of the rules has STR operators paying for licenses, inspections, shoreline allowance purchases, higher insurance, signage, and a new municipal accommodation tax.

The stipulations that pertain to signage have many STR operators fearing for their safety. It means the public sharing of information that may entice thieves.

Watson said she charges $300 for cleaning. But all that goes to a local cleaner she hires to go through the cottages. She also buys local flowers, jams, wines, and other gifts for guests.

"All of our supplies, from cleaning to propane and spring water, are purchased locally," she said, and added that local workers are hired to help maintain the property.

"It seems that, by implementing these new bylaws, you're creating issues that never existed before."

The proposed bylaw is anti-business and anti-family, she said.

"These measures will close the door on tourism," Watson said, and added how that would be a blow many county small businesses can't afford.

STR bylaw needs finer definitions, says HE resident

JAMES MATTHEWS

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The devil is in the details when it comes to regulating short-term rental properties.

Chris Williams is a waterfront property owner just south of Haliburton. He and his family have been there about five years. One of the things that's happened in those five years is that an adjacent property has been purpose-built to be a short-term rental (STR).

"And that has sensitized us to, sort of, this question of what is happening with short-term rentals," he said.

Williams told Highlands East council when it met Feb. 13 that it's well within the township's right to exercise authority over STRs within a well-defined means.

But the devil is in the details, he said.

There needs to be a stronger distinction between STRs that are occasional versus ones that are built solely to be businesses.

Occasional STRs are rentals that have long existed in the area. They're family-owned cottages available for rent only parts of the year. That's the direct opposite of a business STR owned by a corporation with multiple properties open to rent for most of the year.

"It seems like there's a little bit of that in there, in the proposal," he said. "But it needs to be much, much clearer because what seems to be happening is that these businesses will be allowed to operate in all zones, which is kind of counter to what zoning is supposed to do."

Living next to a commercial STR business, your property value will decrease. There are also questions around how the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation will value the properties.

Real estate investment trusts have stacks of money that they use to buy waterfront properties. It's an investment strategy. They're corporations that can be owned by other corporations, and that presents difficulties in understanding the ownership structure of a specific property, he said.

Corporate ownership creates an obstacle for making a complaint when all you have is an email address and no idea if concerns will be heard.

Williams said there is a case to treat a STR business more like a resort or hotel than a family-owned operation. There should be implications that pertain to fees, zones of operation, higher penalties for bylaw infractions, and different taxation.

"If it is a property that loses its license, within a matter of days the corporation can change its ownership and be up and running the next day," Williams said.

"So that really makes a big challenge for creating these bylaws and enforcing them, given that people can avoid them rather easily."

Speed reduction deemed best option

from page 1

"At these speeds, drivers are unable to react to vehicles entering or exiting the roadway," he wrote in a report to council.

The change will cost about $1,000 to basically change speed limit signage along that section of road.

In addition to the number of mishaps, county staff used a scoring system by the Transportation Association of Canada to determine the necessity of the speed limit change.

Roads are considered using such criteria as horizontal of vertical geometry of the thoroughfare, average lane width, the presence of roadside hazards, pedestrian exposure to traffic, the road surface, and the number of public road intersections and private driveways.

"The total score for the survey recommended the 60-kilometre speed for that section of road," Cloutier said. "The results were tabulated and that was the outcome of the study."

Councillor Cecil Ryall, the deputy mayor of Highlands East, said motorists approach driving on that section of road very much like how they drive on a section of Highway 507 from Gooderham along The Buckhorn.

"And that is who can go down there the fastest and set records," he said of motorists' mentality on that highway.

Ryall suggested drivers approach the section of County Road 3 in much the same way, regardless of what the posted speed limit is.

"Is there anything else we can do?" he said. "I'm not comfortable that alone is going to reduce the opportunities for accidents as they're currently occurring."

> ***"I'm not comfortable that alone is going to reduce the opportunities for accidents as they're currently occurring."***
>
> — HE Deputy Mayor Cecil Ryall

"Other options are basically enforcement," Cloutier said. "As well, more presence in the area for enforcement of speed limits. For other options, it's very limited for what we can do for that specific type of road."

Ryall suggested the county reach out to the OPP and request beefed up enforcement.

Warden Liz Danielsen, the mayor of Algonquin Highlands, said the mayors of the four lower tier municipalities meet regularly with the OPP and can make such a request.

"But we do have to keep in mind that there are a lot of other areas within the county that they get the same request, can you do additional patrols?" she said. "And they've only got so many hours when they can do that. But they're pretty responsive when we've asked them to look at a specific area."

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Pension Plans have fiduciary duty to combat climate crisis

THOMAS SMITH

Staff Reporter

"While not all of us have workplace pension plans, all of us have an interest in the Canada Pension Plan," opened Terry Moore, VP of Environment Haliburton.

Shift: Action for Pension Wealth and Planet Health gave a virtual presentation over Zoom on Tuesday this week, hosted by Environment Haliburton (EH!).

Their non-profit organization aims to protect pensions and the climate together by helping Canadians understand where their wealth is invested.

Every working or retired Canadian is part of Canada's Pension Plan. It is one of the largest investment owners in the world.

Adam Scott, director of Shift, took the lead of the presentation, showing a graph of the amount of fossil fuels burned and emitted into the atmosphere

"We are still growing the amount of emissions we are putting into the atmosphere," Scott said.

An increase in floods, droughts, and other extreme weather brought on by climate change post extreme dangers to pensions across Canada, said Scott.

"We have to meet zero emissions really quickly," he said. "Every year, we delay makes it more challenging. We need to think systemically about what a path to zero emissions looks like. There is a serious cost to inaction, it gets harder and more expensive."

Inability to meet zero emissions poses an existential threat to the financial health of pension funds.

"This can't be a generational theft about the future," said Scott. "If we do what we can now, you are not only thinking about your pension plan today, but the pension plan of others in the future. It's become clear that because the strong financial risk of the climate crisis, it has become part of their fiduciary duty to act."

The Canada Pension Plan has investments in utilities, roads, bridges, airports, agriculture, and real estate. Real estate is one of the most important aspects of pension plan investments

Clean energy solutions such as wind and solar are now the cheapest forms of energy. There are transition risks, like that of the change from horse and buggy to cars, said Scott.

Oil and gas companies have been actively fighting climate action. Scott said they have been untruthful about potential solutions.

"Climate change itself has a cascading impact. Damage to the food system, can't get insurance, we are trapped inside our homes because of smoke," he said.

Scott said that all pension plans across Canada are legally required to be a part of the solution and actively invest in solutions for this crisis.

"Its not all risk, and its not all a negative story," said Scott. "If we invest in the economy and invest with us, it is hugely profitable."

If you want to invest in something today that has exponential growth, invest in climate solutions. Solar and wind power generation is currently taking off in popularity with lower costs of entry and consistently advancing technology.

A climate aligned pension funds has several targets including a plan to try to limit global heating under 1.5 degrees including near term targets and appropriate decisions that align with their targets, recognizing the urgency of the climate crisis, mainstreaming climate thinking, climate engagement and the power the pension has on their companies and if they are winding down their fossil fuel use.

Canada Pension Plan Investment Board (CPPIB) is one of the largest investors in the world. Laura McGrath, Shift's pension Engagement Manager says that the Canada Pension Plan is greenwashing, making them appear to be less environmentally damaging than they really are.

The Canada Pension Plan has growing investments in renewable energy, even owning their own renewable energy companies. In many ways, the Canada Pension Plan is seeing the importance in reducing carbon emissions, said McGrath.

While there have been commitments to have net zero greenhouse gas commissions by 2050, there are no checkpoints over the years for Canadians to measure if they are on track.

The Canada Pension Plan has large stakes in oil and gas companies around the world.

"It's own board of directors is entangled in the fossil fuel industry," said McGrath. "Four of them are sitting as directors for fossil fuel companies."

McGrath noted CPPIB has no Indigenous rights policy and have not make a public statement on how they will incorportate this in their investment process. There is a requirement to gain consent from Indigenous communities regarding the companies that affect them, he said.

> ***"If we do what we can now, you are not only thinking about your pension plan today, but the pension plan of others in the future."***
>
> — Adam Scott, director of Shift

It is pointed out that if CPPIB eliminated oil and gas investments and went with greener alternatives, their investments would be higher than they are today.

What can you do as a Canadian citizen?

McGrath said a letter can be sent to your pension fund, follow pension plan activism on social media or see Shift's release of their climate action report card in the future. By going to their website, shiftaction.ca, you can directly send a letter to pension plan managers and show your support for not only your pension's health, but the health of the planet.

Shift also says that you can work with them individually, ask pension managers for meetings, and organize unions. Their goal is for all pension plans in Canada to align with the desire to reach zero emissions and invest in a healthy future.

Hawks are OFSAA bound

The Haliburton Highlands Secondary School Nordic ski team shone at the COSSA championship on Wednesday, Feb. 14, with each athlete qualifying for OFSAA to be held at Lakefield College school. HHSS was team champions in the junior girls, junior boys, and senior girls categories. Violet Humpries won individual gold, and all athletes finished in the top ten. /Photo submitted

OCNA finalists announced

The OCNA award finalists have been announced for 2023, and we're pleased to share our exitement in the *Haliburton Echo* and *Minden Times* staff nominations for several awards.

The *Haliburton Echo* is nominated for a General Excellence award this year in its circulation category. The General Excellence category reflects all parts of the paper with points awarded for ad design, classifieds, editorial content, columnists, sports section, front page design, photography, and community news

In the Premier Awards category, Emily Stonehouse from the *Times* is nominated for Best Editorial in the paper's circulation category. Steve Galea was nominated for Columnist of the Year for the *Haliburton Echo* with an honourable mention to Jim Polling from the *Minden Times*. Adam Frisk was nominated for best feature photo in the *Minden Times*.

Staff

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Local syrup producers take advantage of warm winter

THOMAS SMITH

Staff Reporter

Warmer temperatures and a lack of snow has made for plenty of changes in Haliburton County this winter.

One Haliburton County couple knows this well.

Rick and Wendy Wood have been boiling maple sap that flows from the trees on their property this February, one of the earliest sap seasons they've ever seen.

"I retired 10 years ago. First it started off as a hobby, 80 trees on buckets, the second year it went to 225 trees on buckets, then it just kept going up from there," said Rick Wood as he walked through the forest. "Three years ago, we were almost at 1000, then I realized that I was getting older. Now we are at about 850."

"There is hardly no snow in the bush- compared to most years. Usually when you are tapping the trees, you are in waist deep snow," he said.

In years past, Rick and Wendy would not start tapping the trees on their property in Minden until late February and would not begin boiling for syrup until March.

"Mar. 3 was our earliest boil to date," said Rick.

"He starts a little bit earlier as soon as it starts warming up because he cleans all the lines, and he wants warmer weather to pump water through the lines," explained Wendy. "Normally when we do get that warmer trend in February, he's just getting the lines running."

"It usually took me 10 days to get tapped whereas this year I did it in about five to six just because the snow wasn't as deep," he said.

The couple belong to the Ontario Maple Syrup Producers Association.

"All the people there were talking like who's tapping, who's not," Wendy said."You get a pretty good idea. Like southern Ontario, they're all taps. Some of them, it was the end of January, or even tapping them earlier this year."

"It's getting earlier and earlier every year," said Rick.

The Woods noted there has definitely been a change, but said they have not been doing it as long as other maple veterans, who have 20+ years of experience.

For 40 years, Wendy Wood has been an artist. Her artwork primarily consists of landscape paintings and fibre art. Wendy was the one who suggested that Rick begin tapping the maple trees on their property.

Rick Wood checks the level of syrup in the tank of his maple syrup operation at his home in Minden on a warmer February day. /THOMAS SMITH Staff

"When we started we had put the generic label on it," said Wendy. "Then, the second year, my son said to me, why don't you just do your own label?

"It's a unique label too," said Rick. "I think actually, that helps with sales just because it is something slightly different and it's good syrup."

The Woods sell their maple syrup under the label The Colour of Wood, and it can be found in stores such as Abbey Gardens, Organic Times, and the Rail's End Art Gallery.

"I honestly think it is going to be really short and quick and that we are going to have an early spring, but who knows," Rick said.

While it is possible to turn the syrup into butter and hard candies, the machines required to make the products are not worth it to their small operation, Rick said.

The Woods are originally from Brantford, near Ancaster. When they first began tapping their trees in 2014, Rick was mentored by Ron Reid on Kushog Lake Road.

"If anyone's thinking about doing it as a larger thing other than for personal, definitely be a member [of OMSPA] 'cause there's a lot of free information and you have to follow certain codes, especially with the labelling and everything."

The two joined OMSPA before beginning their syrup production to learn the skills involved with harvesting maple syrup, gain access to experienced producers, and hit the ground running with harvesting. Everything from forest management to pests, the OMSPA provides for syrup producers.

Rick and Wendy'ss favourite uses of maple syrup is as a sweetener in things like smoothies and in BBQ sauce.

Wendy recommends the Maple Royale cocktail:

- ½ shot whiskey of choice
- ½ shot of The Colour of Wood maple syrup

"Since we started making maple syrup, we stopped buying sugar," said Wendy. They use maple syrup for both cooking and baking, replacing sugar almost entirely as a delicious and locally produced sweetening agent.

"We need more snow in the bush so that it will keep the ground cold longer. It all depends on Mother Nature, it has to get cold and warm and it can't get above 13 degrees for a couple days in a row. It's over when the buds grow on the trees. That's when the syrup goes buddy. It has an off flavour, that's when it is finished."

"Sap is like a thermometer. All the sap is at the bottom of the base when it is cold," said Rick. "And when it goes up, it goes up the tree to wake up the tree, then when it gets cold at night it all goes back down again. When you get the sap is when it is going up the tree, when it is getting warm."

It cycles every day, just like a heart.

The 370 taps on the south part of their property produce the same amount of sap as the 580 taps on the northern part of their property. This is because the south side warms up quicker and can run longer, explained Rick Wood.

Their property is a managed forest and has been since before the couple purchased the property.

"That's one of the reasons why we bought this property," said Wendy, "was because the forest was in such nice shape."

All of the taps and lines that the Woods use for their syrup production run on gravity fed lines.

"Sometimes if you tap early, you can dry up your taps, but I haven't seen that. The big guys tap 10,000 to 20,000 trees," said Rick. "They have to run early due to using a vacuum system."

"Every year, we have on average 20 boils. This year we have had two, which is 10 per cent of our crop."

In recent years, the Woods have invested in a reverse osmosis (RO) machine to assist in syrup products. While the syrup straight from the tree has a sugar content of two per cent, the RO machine can make the sap have a sugar content of seven or eight per cent. For each doubling percentage of sugar content, it reduces half the water, said Rick.

Boiling the sap in their sugar shack is a labour of love. Rick must refill the boiler's firewood supply every 15 minutes, keeping him awake throughout the night.

Colour of Wood's Open House is open to the public for the Maple Weekend celebrations on April 6 and 7 located at 1255 Peterson Rd.

Breakfast for dinner

St. Paul's Anglican Church in Minden served up stacks of delicious pancakes with a side of sausage for Shrove Tuesday on Feb. 13. /TIM YANO Special to the *Echo*

Shrove Tuesday attendees enjoy their homemade pancakes made by volunteers last Tuesday.

Group brings green, winter burial issue to Highlands East

JAMES MATTHEWS

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Green Burial Society would like to resurrect the past effort to allow that form of interment in Highlands East.

The municipality had by 2019 sponsored a U-Links research project into green burials. And that showed there was an interest in the concept within the township, said Terry Moore, president of the Haliburton Highlands Green Burial Society.

"We watched how that interest grew into a commitment to create a green burial section at the Deer Lake Cemetery," Moore told council when it met Feb. 13.

Council decided to accept Moore's presentation as information.

The process to establish that section had been put on hold to explore the possibility of adding a winter burial option at the cemetery.

Moore said his group is ready to help connect township staff with other municipalities that currently practice green and winter burials. The group is "willing to help find practical solutions to the unique problems and barriers you're grappling with," he said.

Algonquin Highlands has already committed to establishing both green burial and winter interment sections at its St. Stephen's Cemetery. The society has been working with those neighbours on the issue since June 2023.

He said there's hope that municipality's cemetery bylaw could be amended in time to allow the purchase of green burial plots by this fall.

Algonquin Highlands council has asked staff to return as soon as possible with an operational plan for introducing the winter burial option within the green burial section only.

St. Stephen's will be the first cemetery in Haliburton County to offer winter burial, as all four townships currently close their cemeteries from freeze up in

November through to the spring thaw.

This means that burial of any kind is simply not available in Haliburton for almost half the year.

Moore said the advisory committee made up of society members and municipal staff are talk about green burial space amenities like gazebos and such.

"Cremation is a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions and the choice of an increasing percentage of Canadians, reaching almost 75 per cent of deaths in 2022," he said.

"The pandemic almost certainly has accelerated this trend."

And with no burial options for more than half the year in Haliburton County, cremation becomes the only choice.

"Why would anybody purchase burial rights if they know they can't use them up to seven months of the year?" he said.

Allowing green and winter burials in Highlands East would allow people a real choice to leave as green a legacy as possible after death.

"Our bodies are not waste to be discarded into the atmosphere but, like all other species on the planet, an essential resource for the biosphere's endless cycle of death giving birth to life," Moore said.

Morning mingling

The Haliburton Highlands Chamber of Commerce held a Business Networking breakfast event on Feb. 15th at EAT Cheeserie & Cocktails and Ommmh in downtown Minden. The event saw many from the business community come out to hear about funding opportunities through the Haliburton County Development Corporation (HCDC) and The County of Haliburton. Guest speakers included HCDC's Program & Operations Coordinator Heather Reid and Manager of Tourism for The County of Haliburton, Angelica Ingram. For more information about the Haliburton Highlands Chamber of Commerce, including upcoming events, visit: haliburtonchamber.com or follow them on social media. /Photo submitted

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A Pine Marten in the snow. By Tammy Nash

Community, in every sense

The Ontario Community Newspaper Association (OCNA) awards were announced last week.

As a rule, I hope for the best but avoid expectations for things like this.

It was mine and Emily Stonehouse's first full year as editors. We're pretty new to the journalism world and even newer to running the show.

Our team makes sure to give each other feedback always. And of course the most important feedback is yours!

It's why we have the papers in the first place.

They're called community newspapers for a reason.

But it was a Valentine's Day gift to us all at the *Echo* and *Times* to have our people nominated for up for first, second, or third in a few categories in the OCNA awards for 2023.

vivian collings

Editorial

We're so proud of Emily, Steve Galea, Adam Frisk, Jim Poling, and Nate Smelle, editor of the *Bancroft Times* and *Bancroft This Week*, for their award nominations and honourable mentions.

The *Echo* itself was nominated for general excellence.

For this category, we submitted two of last year's papers, each from months chosen by OCNA.

They looked into all parts of the paper: articles, photos, layout and design, ads, editorial pages.

Being recognized for the success of this is so exciting because it's a true reflection of how everyone on the team adds their expertise to become the final product.

More than that, it means we all work together to make everything fit well into one package.

Unlike group work in public school, it's one of the first team projects I've been on where everyone pulls equal weight.

And truly, it's a collaborative effort on the whole community's part.

We have vibrant stories and photos, quotes and submissions, because of everyone who lives, works, and experiences here.

We have ads thanks to your trust in our papers.

We're truly just the vehicle to get it all out - to educate and inform others in the area that might not know about your story, business, or event.

Our staff have the tools to quite literally get it on paper, and the rest is up to you.

It's why community newspapers are so important and it's why they exist.

If it were only the big ticket headlines that mattered, we wouldn't be here.

Unfortunately, that's the reality for other small towns in Canada.

I've said it many times before, but here I go again: Haliburton County's lucky to have so many news sources. Especially ones on actual paper that you can hold in your hands.

We all know about the decision from Metroland to end the print editions of their community newspapers last year.

Small towns just like here either get their news online now or not at all.

Lucky is an understatement.

So we owe our success all to you, and we get to carry on the legacy of printing a paper that's been here and intertwined in the community for 140 years.

Thanks to you, we get to keep writing, photographing, and designing.

I won't be taking that for granted anytime soon.

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Four hearts

I'VE BEEN teaching yoga, qigong and meditation since before my daughter, Madeline, was born.

I practiced yoga throughout my pregnancy with her and in all her years as she grew. I've always loved the imagination, the visualizations, the magical and mystical parts of these practices.

I have loved the benefits of quiet, stillness and being kind towards myself. I especially love the feeling of community in the classes that I teach.

As I age I know that I need to keep moving and maintain my strength, flexibility and the ability to balance. Madeline came into the world as a person who loves science and math, as well as the arts, and always loved the research and the science behind the human body.

Tales from the great

lynda shadbolt

Green meadow

She loves to look for deep understanding and evidence. We've had many discussions over the years about maintaining good health and a healthy body.

Madeline loves that I am on the fanciful side, and I love that she is on the scientific side. Madeline always has had a healthy dose of skepticism when I share ideas from the yogic perspective, and I've always had a healthy dose of skepticism that everything needs evidence to prove that it helps.

We have both always agreed that it takes many tools and practices to have a healthy body, mind and spirit. Madeline is currently in her first year of medicine at University of Ottawa.

For the past six weeks she has been learning about the heart from cardiologists that teach in the program. She has absolutely loved it and is amazed by how much there is to learn.

She held a human heart in her hands. How incredible is that? One night while chatting to her I, of course, said to her, "I wonder if the doctors will teach you about the four hearts that we each have. I then reminded her that the yogi's say that we each have four hearts - our beating heart that circulates the blood, our emotional heart that feels and expresses love and joy and compassion, our spiritual heart that connects to all of life, and the great heart that is the love that the universe has for our all of us. The idea is that we are all held in this great heart.

As I reminded Madeline of this she laughed and said, "They haven't covered that yet, but we'll see." This week Madeline called to tell me that she has written her exam on the heart, and there were no questions on the four hearts.

We had a good laugh. I love that we can have these kinds of conversations and be open about the many possibilities for caring for our bodies.

We all want to be healthy and strong and able to live the lives that we are given. It is our responsibility to take good care of ourselves.

We all need access to good health care, and we all need to find the resources and support that help keep us well.

We need our hearts to beat strongly so that we can ski and play hockey and ride bikes. And we need our hearts to feel that we are loved and that we belong and matter.

Medicine for the heart comes in many forms.

points of view

Post Valentine's report

steve galea

Loon Tales

PAT BENATAR once sang love is a battlefield. Well, if my experience is any indication, I think Valentine's Day is very likely the pivotal action of the war. If you get Valentine's Day right, the rest of the campaign will be on track.

The good news is I think I did it right this year. I made sure Jenn came home to her favourite meal, complete with a nice dessert, and I even remembered to buy her a nice card filled with the kind of mushy sentiments that would get your mouth washed out with soap at any respectable hunt camp in the province. And then I put a special note in the card too that told her in no uncertain terms that she is my one and only.

Having said that, I am nothing if not a perfectionist. So, I did a post-Valentine's Day assessment to see how I could do things even better next year.

Here are a some of my insights. Maybe they can help you too.

First, a candlelight dinner is not all it's cracked up to be. In fact, eventually, I had to turn the oven on because the candlelight was not providing enough heat to cook the lasagne. And, before you write a letter to the editor criticizing me, let me say I'm not an idiot. I tried using the second candle too. Still not enough heat.

I also made a note to take my glasses with me when buying next year's Valentine's Day card. The card I gave Jenn would have only worked if her birthday was on February 14. And, frankly, even though I did a good job crossing out the word "Birthday" and replacing it with "Valentine's", I think she still clued in that something was amiss. It might have been the drawing of the birthday cake. Furthermore, on the personal note I left, I should have edited out the part about me loving her as much as a five-pound bass on a topwater fly. It should have read "more than".

Next year, I will also dress better. I should not have greeted her at the door wearing track pants and a hoodie, even though these track pants actually had a draw string to keep them up.

I know that now.

To her credit, Jenn did not complain at all about my attire, although she did utter one offhand remark about maybe next year I ought to greet her at the door wearing something a little more exciting.

So, next year, chest waders, fishing vest, and hat it is!

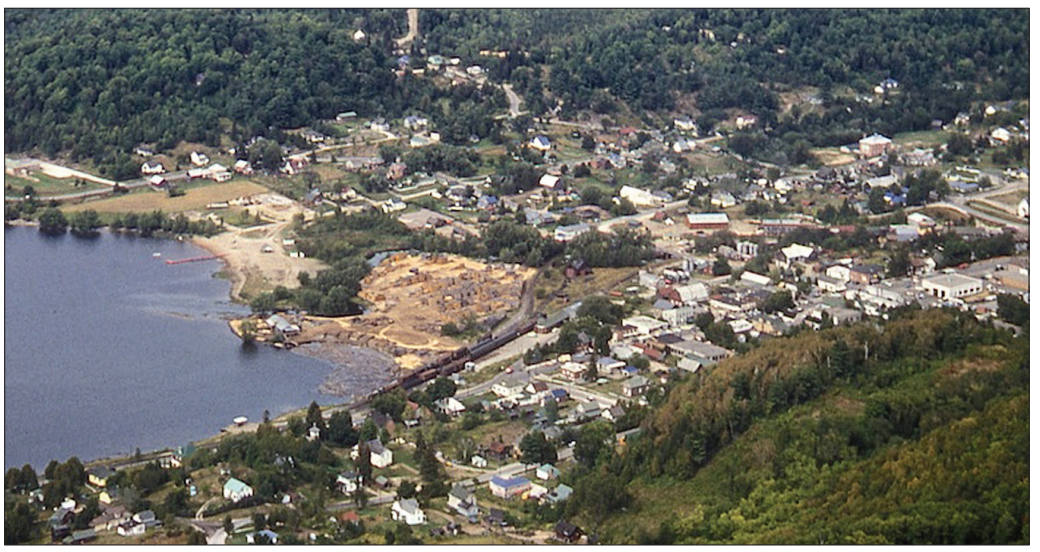
Next, I should stop pointing out that Valentine's Day is the only holiday named after a massacre. Apparently, the Valentine's Day massacre happened in 1929 and, according to Jenn at least, Valentine's Day has been around for a lot longer than that – even though I can't recall hearing my grandfather ever complain about it. Additionally, I need to remember that having that discussion is also is what Jenn referred to as "Not very romantic."

Lastly, I need to remember that when Jenn puts out her hand for me to hold across the table, it is not an invitation to arm wrestle.

Which is good because she beat me two out of three times.

These are the important details I need to remember for next Valentine's Day. I will too.

And, you know, February 15, 2025 is going to be an excellent day because of it.



pic *of the* past

Haliburton looked much different in 1960. In this photo by Bob and Cathy Haskill of Mississauga, you can see Head Lake Park as a sawmill; the train station; the old arena and GM dealership on Highland Street.

letters to the editor

To Dysart et al council regarding short term rentals

To the Editor,

There was a time many years ago when I had to visit an elementary school at recess. A little one, perhaps Grade 1 or 2, was standing alone beside a white-painted line, and she was crying. I went over to her to see if I could help. She told me that she needed to talk to her brother, but she was not allowed to cross the painted line to go to his side of the yard. It was a school rule. I know that the administrator had good intentions when he or she made that rule, but not only was it unfair to the little girl, but to my mind, it was detrimental to the good of the school community.

In later years, as a principal in a school with a student population of 865 students, a teacher came into my office to tell me some kids were playing in an area of the yard where they should not be. She wanted a school rule to make sure kids didn't go there. Her request was reasonable, and I asked how many kids were doing this. She replied that it was five or six, sometimes a few more and that it was always the same group. I suggested that I would deal with the kids involved before I would make it a rule for the other 855.

Why am I sharing these stories? Because I understand that it can be difficult to effectively solve a problem that affects "some" without damaging "all". There is a problem in Dysart el al with some Short Term Rentals (STRs). We all want it solved. Let's register, license, STRs to keep track of the problems and collect the data. Do we know how many STRs have had complaints against them? What are their locations? Is there a bylaw, to or how about we tax all STRs 4 per cent on every booking? How about we make the waterfront STRs buy their shoreline allowance? How about we make sure every STR has two million dollars in liability insurance? To what end? Will these measures accomplish the goal? I have an STR. It is a guest suite attached to my home. I live here. I am always present when we have guests. In the almost six years that I have had the STR, I have never had a problem. No one has ever broken any of our house rules. I am not on the water. But even if I was, there would not be any problems. I suspect I represent many, if not most, of STR owners.

I have been following the newspaper accounts of this issue, and I am concerned that one or more of you have been misquoted. I can't imagine that you would allude to the new tax on STRs by saying that it could be used to help with costs associated with road repairs. It may be legal, but is it ethical to tax small independent business owners for this purpose? I also read a comment that alluded to STR guests simply staying in our municipality for a few days and then leaving. This was stated as if that is part of the problem. Again, I must have misunderstood. Yes, that's exactly what they do. Last week, parents with their two children stayed at my Airbnb for three nights and went skiing at Sir Sam's. This week I have two Airbnb guests, one of whom is taking a five day course at Fleming School of Art and Design. This is tourism, and it is important to our community. I enjoy being an ambassador for the amazing Haliburton Highlands. And when my Airbnb is not booked, I enjoy that it is available for visits by my children and their families. It works well for all concerned.

Finally, I am left wondering if your goal is to solve the problem or if is it to generate new taxes and/or get rid of all the STRS. I can't help but think that doing so will also get rid of the tourist dollars these bring to our municipality.

Gail Stelter
Haliburton

Letters to the Editor note: Submissions are subject to editing for newspaper style and punctuation.

Instagrammable: social media and body image

IN FEBRUARY 2023, researchers from three Ontario universities and the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario published a study showing that teens and young adults who decreased their social media use by 50 per cent showed improvement in how they felt about their weight and overall appearance within a three-week period.

In this randomized control trial, 220 participants aged 17-25 years were selected from an introductory psychology course at a Canadian university if they were already regular social media users and exhibiting symptoms of anxiety or depression. Using screen time reports, participants were randomly selected to reduce their social media use to 1 hour per day. At the end of the study, participants who had reduced their social media use reported improvements in body image.

Erin Kernohan-Berning

Humasn and Technology

Social media is often blamed for body image issues among people of all ages, particularly teens and young adults. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Facebook and Snapchat are full of celebrities promoting unrealistic beauty standards and feature digital filters that can sculpt and airbrush any selfie into someone unrecognizable with just a tap. There are wellness and beauty influencers that spread health misinformation in order to sell supplements and diet products. An entire genre of videos referred to as "grocery store walkers" features influencers walking down the aisles of popular stores like Costco fearmongering about very common ingredients found in safe and affordable foods.

Unrealistic beauty standards and body image issues pre-date the internet and social media. Take for instance the romanticization of tuberculosis. Dr. Carolyn Day, author of Consumptive Chic: A History of Beauty, Fashion, and Disease, has described how thinness, a pale complexion, and the rosy flush of fever became a popular look in the 19th century. Cosmetics were marketed to healthy women, some containing dangerous ingredients such as belladonna and arsenic, to emulate the appearance of dying from a very horrible disease.

Most readers, when thinking back to the late 20th century, can probably recall at least one arbitrary beauty ideal that brought with it some loss of confidence. The Twiggy-esque figure of the 1960s, the rise of Weight Watchers and other similar fad diet programs, the heroin chic look of the 1990s, celebrity beach body issues of tabloids lining the grocery store checkout line, just to name a few. As a society well before social media we were inundated with messaging that our bodies are not good enough unless they look a certain way.

This is not to say that social media has nothing to do with fostering poor body image – but blaming social media alone misses both the social pressures around beauty standards and how social media itself can potentially combat the problem. A study from the University of Surrey, in England, exposed 207 young men and women to images of idealized body types or body types of varying sizes, shapes and features. They found that those exposed to images of idealized body types had more feelings of negative body image, while those who were exposed to different varying body types had more feelings of positive body image.

In 2022, a video made the rounds on social media of Magic Mike leading man Channing Tatum being interviewed on the Kelly Clarkson Show. When a photo of his ultra-lean physique from the movie was shown on the big screen behind him, Tatum said that obtaining that body ideal was not healthy for him and that he hesitated to go through that process again. The video generated discussion among viewers about how the images we are exposed to greatly skew what we think is realistic and normal for a body to look like.

Author of The Body Issue, Nealie Tan Ngo, says in the AMA Journal of Ethics "…poor body image is more sinister than just not feeling happy with the way one looks. […] physical bodies are social bodies; beauty is linked to our perceptions of health, wealth, power, and overall success…" As such, Western beauty standards disproportionately harm black, indigenous, and women of colour, 2SLGBTQIA+ people, disabled people, middle-aged and senior women, and people in larger bodies, by slotting humans into those hierarchies based on appearance.

The idea that there is no perfect body, and that all bodies are good bodies, is central to the body positivity movement. Body positivity attempts to foster positive body image regardless of what beauty standard of the day society is feeding us. Creators like actress Jameela Jamil and body positivity advocate Taryn Brumfitt are just two of many who make it their mission to increase acceptance for all body types. Promoting and engaging with this kind of content on social media can help us understand that our bodies have value beyond the often unrealistic beauty standards we are fed in our media – social or otherwise.

The Principles of an Economic Charter of Rights

There's an economic storm brewing

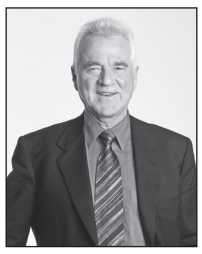
NO ONE likes being the bearer of bad news, but I truly believe, with every bone in my body, that we're headed for some severe times in the years ahead.

How severe?

Depression-era levels of unemployment, for one. The large spike in joblessness will be brought about by many factors all taking place at once, including the digital and AI revolution, which will wipe out a large number of white-collar jobs, and the disruption to global trade brought about by increased regional strife and armed conflict.

I also foresee food shortages coming to our shores, and food will continue to become more and more costly.

A new poll published last week by the Financial Services Regulatory Authority of Ontario (FSRA) revealed that more than 44 per cent of residents in Ontario said the high cost of living is taking a big bite out of their cashflow, leaving them with less dollars for retirement savings. In other words, while it's getting harder and harder to put food on the table, it's also getting much more difficult to sock away savings for our retirement years.



frank stronach

Principles

I lived through the Great Depression as a young boy. People got by. They made do with what they had. In our house, that meant eating cornmeal three times a day. I don't think the downturn we're going to experience will be as bad or long, but I do think it will be more severe than any recession we've had in nearly a century.

For many small business owners in Canada right now, we're already in a period of deep economic turmoil. A report published last week by the federal Office of the Superintendent of Bankruptcy showed that business bankruptcies were up 75 per cent over the previous year.

On top of that, according to Statistics Canada there were over 200,000 business closures between June and October 2023, which means the owners simply closed up shop rather than file for bankruptcy. That's a sad commentary on the business environment we've created in this country.

As with everything in life, major disruptive events like economic downturns are sometimes beyond our control. But it nevertheless makes you wonder: to what extent have we been the authors of our own economic misfortune?

Regardless, there are still many steps we can take right now to make our economy stronger and more resistant to the economic storm that is brewing.

One of the surest ways we can bolster our economy is through the implementation of an economic charter of rights that will get our government finances and economy back on a solid footing. I believe it would completely regenerate Canada by raising incomes and living standards and reining in the damage currently being done by government debt and spending that has gone completely off the rails.

Small business owners, who are being battered right now from all directions, would especially benefit from the economic charter since it would eliminate business tax on these companies and dramatically reduce the number of regulations currently strangling small business.

But small businesses and besieged Canadians can't sit back and hope for better days. They need to fight for change. The national coalition I've formed to push for an economic charter of rights is one of the best ways we can restore sound economic principles and place our country in a much better position to weather the economic downturn that is inevitably coming.

To learn more about the economic charter and how it could generate economic growth and prosperity, email me at info@economiccharter.ca. Or to learn more about the economic charter, visit: www.economiccharter.ca.

Author Bio

Frank Stronach is the founder of Magna International Inc., one of Canada's largest global companies, and was inducted into the Automotive Hall of Fame.

fstronachlpc@gmail.com.

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Tourism Tales from My Haliburton Highlands

Throughout life most people encounter many full circle moments and putting pen to (news)paper sure is one of them for me. It's been a minute since my words filled the pages of The *Haliburton Echo* & *Minden Times* and somehow it feels like I've never left.

During the past few years I have written columns on behalf of SIRCH Community Services and The Haliburton Business Improvement Area (BIA). However now it's time for me to put a new hat on and introduce myself as the new Tourism Manager for the County of Haliburton. We are gearing up for another busy year in the Haliburton Highlands and I hope to use this space to provide seasonal tourism updates with you and let you know what's happening.

Thank you to everyone who participated and volunteered in our annual Hike Haliburton Festival - Winter Edition that took place Feb. 3 and 4th! We saw 12 hikes take place across Haliburton County and there were 135 participants who registered, with 52 per cent of the registration/participants coming from outside of the Haliburton Highlands. These hikes are run by volunteers who selflessly give of their knowledge and time. Thank you to staff, especially Thom Lambert and Eric Casper, for once again ensuring the festival went off without a hitch!

Shifting now to an economic development lens, we want your input. The Province of Ontario is creating a Rural Economic Development Strategy and is seeking information to help guide the process. Some of the key questions being asked are:

1) What is the most pressing economic obstacle or opportunity in your community or across rural Ontario? Why?

2) How can communities and government work together to improve local economies or better support local businesses?

3) What changes has your community experienced in the last few years that have presented new opportunities for economic growth? And how can the province help you take advantage of those opportunities?

There are multiple ways for you to submit your answers, including online, email or regular mail. More information can be found here: https://www.ontario.ca/page/consultation-rural-economic-development-strategy.

As we head into the Family Day long weekend there are so many exciting events and activities happening throughout the county. Some highlights include the annual Dorset Snowball on Saturday, February 17th, art gallery exhibits at the Minden Hills Cultural Centre and Rails End Gallery (both of which feature local artists and students!), live music events, a Family Day Open House (also at the Minden Hills Cultural Centre), skiing, skating and so much more!

Check out listings from across My Haliburton Highlands by visiting: https://myhaliburtonhighlands.com/whats-happening/. Before you know it, the sweetness of Maple Syrup season will be here.

As always, we are open to hearing from you and what you have going on. Never hesitate to drop us an email at info@haliburtonhighlands.com or give us a call at 1-800-461-7677.

There is never a dull moment in the Haliburton Highlands and we are excited about that.

Take care and stay warm.

Submitted by Angelica Ingram,
County of Haliburton tourism manager

Calling all designers and artists

This year the U-Links Centre for Community-Based Research is celebrating its 25th year of engaging post secondary students in research in Haliburton County.

We work with students and professors from Trent University, Fleming College and other institutions to solve local problems that you – residents of the County – make us aware of! We work in all sectors – cultural, social, business, environmental and economic – to ensure that Haliburton County remains a great place to live, work and recreate in.

Keep an eye on the local media for notification of several events that U-Links will be hosting throughout 2024 and be sure to join us at our annual Celebration of Research at The Haliburton School of Art and Design on Saturday, March 23.

As part of our celebrations, we are inviting local artists and designers to submit suggestions for a 25th anniversary logo that will be displayed at our events and on our correspondence through 2024. The Logo should clearly indicate U-Links 25th Anniversary but other than that designers are free to integrate into the logo, themes that address learning, education, students, local issues and Haliburton County. There is no restriction on the use of colour or design patterns. The only request is that it can be printed in black and white or in colour.

Additional information on U-Links can be found at ulinks.ca; the searchable research database on that site will also provide artists with topics that have been historically addressed by U-Links.

The winner will be announced, and the logo prominently displayed at our Celebration of Research. The winner will receive a prize and be given name recognition throughout the year. Please consider entering!

Please note that the winner will retain designer's rights to the logo but that the logo may only be displayed with the permission of U-Links. U-Links also reserves the right to forgo declaring a winner, in the event that no suitable logo is submitted.

Logo submissions should be sent via email to admin@ulinks.ca with 'LOGO DESIGN' clearly indicated in the subject line. Please indicate how you would like to be contacted if you are the successful submission: email or phone. The deadline for submissions is midnight, March 15, 2024.

Logo for the 25th anniversary year of U-Links
Criteria:

No colour constraints but the logo needs to be able to be printed in black and white.

Submissions to be sent to admin@ulinks.ca with 'LOGO DESIGN' in the subject line.

Individuals may submit a maximum of two entries.

Entries may be in the following formats – pdf or jpeg.

The chosen logo to be unveiled on March 23 at the U-Links Celebration of Research.

Artist retains the copyright, providing rights to U-Links to use for promotional purposes.

A $75 Gift Certificate for Curry's Artists Materials will be awarded the creator of the chosen design.

The winner will be notified by either email or phone.

U-Links retains the right to forgo declaring a winner, in the event that no suitable logo is submitted.

Submitted

Get support with new Connections Committee

In the ongoing effort to develop relationships with People with Lived and Living Experience (PWLLE), the Connections Committee is offering an open Q&A session with community leaders and PWLLE on Wednesday, Feb. 28 from 1- 2:30 p.m. The last half -hour will be designated for optional further discussion.

This free education series is for service providers or community members who want to get involved in fostering a compassionate and evidence-based approach to substance use and mental health in Haliburton County. Participants new to the process are welcome to attend.

A zoom link will be provided to registered participants in advance of the session. Please register with Amanda Duncombe-Lee (amandadl@pointintime.ca), Strategic Services Coordinator, with your name, position, and contact details by Friday, Feb. 23.

Please visit www.pointintime.ca more details, and feel free to send questions or suggestions in advance. Hope to see you there.

Submitted by Point in Time
Centre for Children, Youth and Parents

The hidden benefits of routine

in the context of adult daily life, the word 'routine' can sometimes have a negative connotation, conjuring images of daily commuting, domestic chores or other dull and time intensive parts of 'adulting' – routines that we long to break out of, or approach differently.

But in the context of the caregiver-child relationship, these types of seemingly mundane routines have a powerful and essential role. Setting regular expectations for routines, such as tasks and transitions expected before and after school and inside the classroom, can help reduce adult-child conflict and power struggles at school and at home. Systematic research in the child development field has demonstrated that regular routines are associated with better self regulation, autonomy and social skills, and overall mental and physical health.

All caregivers know that sticking to a routine can be much more difficult than it seems. Mornings are usually full of transitions, and most kids find transitions hard. Just getting a child on the bus to school in the morning dressed for the weather with teeth brushed and something in their stomach in a short timeline is considered a small victory for many caregivers.

Consistently following routines may be more of a struggle for kids who have challenges with executive functioning or sensory processing skills; others may be dealing with anxiety and depression that can affect their motivation. In these situations, children can benefit from additional reminders, dedicated connection time with their caregiver, and visual aids or countdowns. Every child needs a plan and tools that are unique and adaptable to their specific personality and circumstances, and it often takes a lot of trial and error to produce a routine that reliably produces results.

If you are a caregiver in need of support with this issue or others, you can call Point in Time offices at (705)-457-5345 or email info@pointintime.ca to make a Quick Access appointment. The process is quick, easy, and confidential.

Submitted by Point in Time
Centre for Children, Youth and Parents

Board Member Recruitment for 2024/2025

Haliburton Highlands Health Services (HHHS) delivers high-quality health services to residents, cottagers, and visitors to Haliburton County and the surrounding area. We work closely with local and regional partners to optimize health and wellbeing in Haliburton County by providing access to essential health services, including Primary Care, Hospital (Acute Inpatient and Emergency Care at the Haliburton site), Long-Term Care, End-of-Life Care, Mental Health & Addictions Services, and Community Support Services. For more information about our organization please visit our website at www.hhhs.ca.

HHHS is seeking strategic, experienced, engaged, and talented members of our community to join us in pursuit of this vision by participating as a voluntary member of our Board of Directors or as a Community Representative on one of the Board's Standing Committees.

At a minimum, board members should expect to devote approximately 10 hours of time per month to HHHS business, including attendance at monthly board and committee meetings both in-person and virtually.

Annual board recruitment is based on vacancies and the requirements identified through a Board Skills Matrix that ensures a complementary balance of knowledge, skills and experience. **This year we are seeking individuals with clinical background, legal, and patient and healthcare advocacy backgrounds.**

How to be Considered

Interested applicants are requested to complete an application form and submit it along with a covering letter and resume via email quoting "HHHS Board Recruitment" in the subject line to mhenry@hhhs.ca by **March 1, 2024**. All applications will be acknowledged and held in confidence.

Application forms and additional board information can be found at: www.hhhs.ca/about/board

Inquiries can be directed to:

Email: mhenry@hhhs.ca
Phone: (705) 457-2527

VDO dedicates Honduras trip to Lisa Kerr

VIVIAN COLLINGS
Editor

Dentists, hygienists, and assistants from the Haliburton County Volunteer Dental Outreach (VDO) are gearing up to fly to Honduras this week to share the gift of healthy smiles with 700 children.

Since Bill Kerr's first trip in 2009, the dentist from Dentistry in the Highlands was inspired to start VDO.

"On the plane ride back, I turned to one of the hygienists and said, 'There's an awful lot of poverty in Haliburton County, and wouldn't it be great if we could open up a free clinic in Haliburton and look after some of the people that can't afford to look after themselves,'" he said.

The dream became a reality, and Kerr has been flying back to Honduras every year, minus the past three due to COVID-19 health measures.

It's now a family affair. All three of his kids now have their own careers in the dentistry.

"This trip is what got me interested in dentistry in the first place. It was my first exposure to the dentist's perspective. It's cool to have a specific skill where you can help people and see a difference," said Loretta Kerr, Bill's daughter and fellow dentist. "We go in and see that these people have no access to dental care. We can also see the value of patient education."

Back in 2008, Bill became friends with someone living half of the year in Haliburton and half of the year in Honduras.

He knew he wanted to share his skills in an area that didn't have them, so it was the perfect place to start.

Bill, Loretta, Lisa, and J.J. Kerr stand together on one of VDO's past Honduras trips. This year, Loretta, Bill, and 17 others from their team are going back to provide free dental care for local children. /Photo submitted

"Basically the hygienists would see the kids at school, clean their teeth, and if any of them needed more work done they'd bring them to the clinic I was working in, and I'd do as much dentistry as I could," he said.

He then recruited more volunteers for the following year.

In 2010, Bill's son J.J. went as his assistant while in high school.

Loretta, went when she was in Grade 11 in 2011.

"Our other son Steve came for a few times as well, and he's now a denturist," Bill said.

J.J. and Loretta were each able to go as student dentists in their fourth year of dental school through an outreach program with the University of Toronto.

"Lisa came for the first time in 2011 as well," Bill said.

Lisa, Bill's wife, passed away on Feb. 15, 2023, and he said this year's trip is dedicated to her memory.

"She would've loved to be there with us. She was such a huge part of putting it together," Bill said.

With a team of 19 this year, Bill and a few others will fly down on Wednesday, Feb. 21 with the rest of the team following on Saturday.

"The weird thing about going back now is that we'll be seeing kids we might have never met since it's been four years. There's going to be a lot to catch up on this year," Loretta said.

The team flies into San Pedro Sula, a city in the northern part of Honduras.

A bus will then them to the smaller village of El Porvenir.

With a population of 6,000, the town has three schools.

"We see probably all of the kids from the biggest school, and in the second week, we see kids from the smaller schools, and then we also see kids from an orphanage," Bill said.

"You know you're making a difference when you see kids year after year and their smiles are healthier," Loretta said. "We're excited to go back."

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Kawartha champs

The Haliburton Highlands Secondary School junior girls volleyball team grin with pride after winning the Kawartha Championship on home ground on Thursday, Feb. 15. The team will compete in the COSSA championships. /TIM YANO Special to the *Echo*

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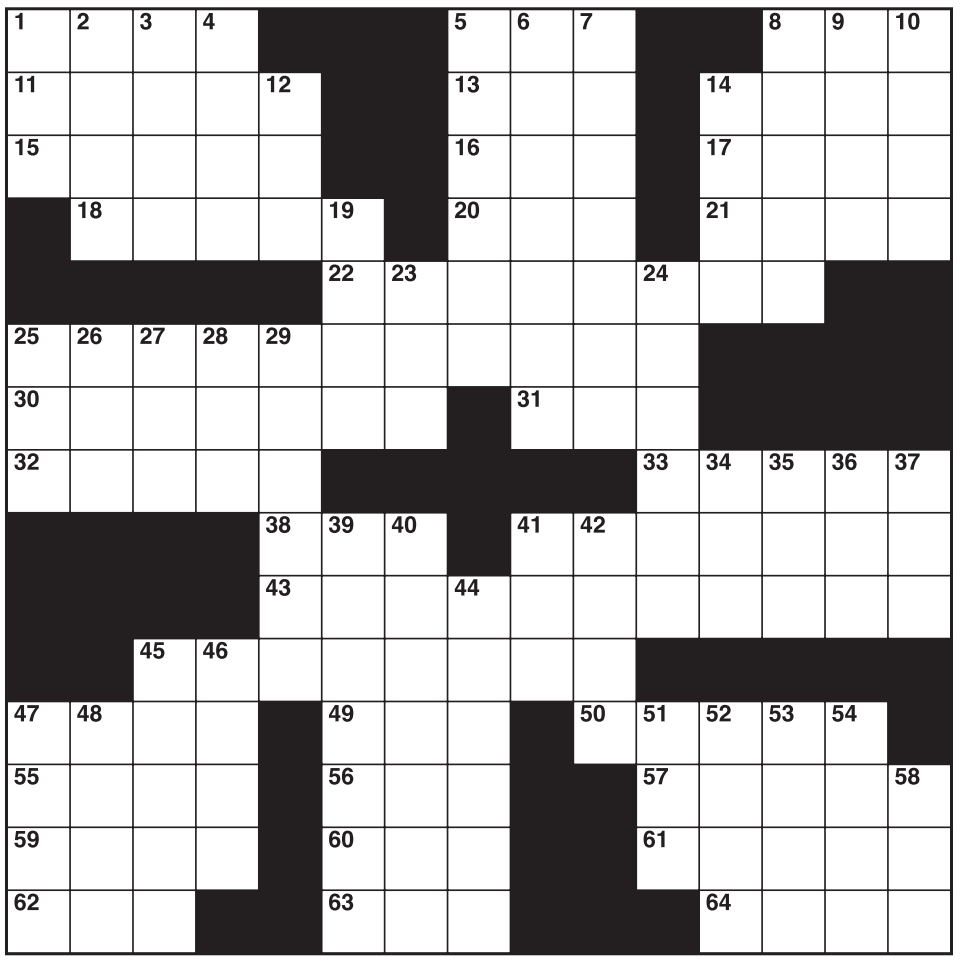
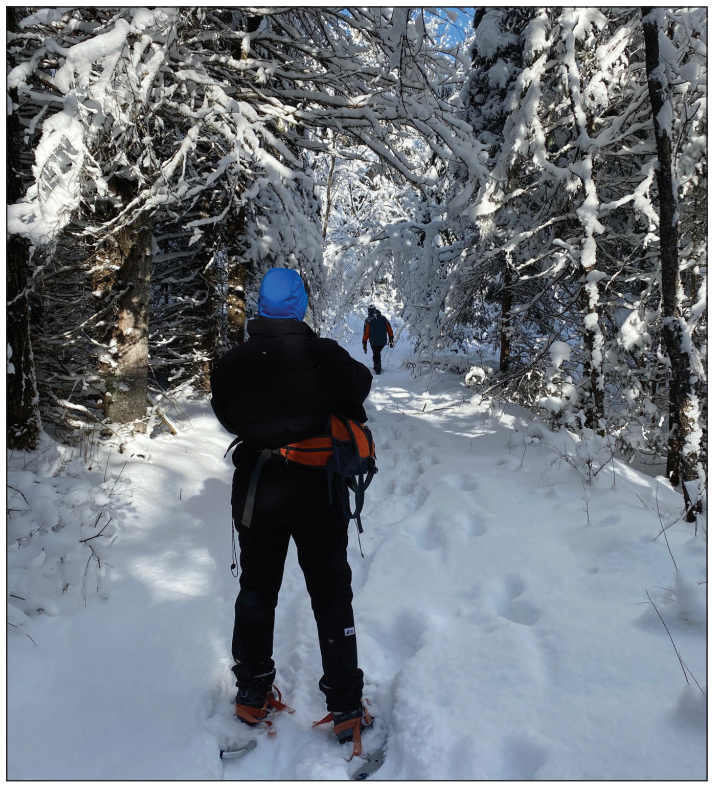


CLUES ACROSS
1. Golf scores
5. Shock therapy
8. Ballplayer's tool
11. Quench one's thirst
13. Female relatives of American war vets (abbr.)
14. Every one of two or more things
15. Member of Muslim people
16. Play
17. Type of cheese
18. Type of lounge chair
20. __ King Cole, musician
21. Fellows
22. North, Central and South
25. In an early way
30. Foes
31. Georgia rockers
32. Cryptocurrency
33. Narrow path along a slope
38. Disallow
41. Joyousness
43. Inaccessible
45. Evoke emotions
47. Ancient kingdom near Dead Sea
49. Boston Celtic punk rockers (abbr.)
50. Sword
55. Actor Idris
56. Affirmative (slang)
57. Afflicted
59. One point north of northeast
60. Born of
61. Arabic name
62. Traumatic brain injury (abbr.)
63. Extremity
64. Post

CLUES DOWN
1. Pacific Standard Time
2. Protruding ridge on nematodes
3. Indian king
4. Type of milk
5. One who brings home the bacon
6. More comprehensible
7. Connected with sense of touch
8. Red mineral
9. Breezed through
10. Therefore
12. Supplement with difficulty
14. Early kingdom of Syria
19. Satisfy
23. They confuse doctors (abbr.)
24. Brass instrument
25. Domesticated animal
26. Ribonucleic acid
27. Snakelike fish
28. Woman (French)
29. Economically-minded aircraft
34. When you hope to get somewhere
35. Tease
36. Actress Gretchen
37. Midway between northeast and east
39. Inoffensive
40. Yellowish cotton cloth
41. Consume
42. Does not tell the truth
44. Improved something
45. Spiritual leader
46. Abba __, Israeli politician
47. Fix
48. Evergreen tree genus
51. Swiss river
52. Prejudice
53. Major C. European river
54. Long, narrow strap
58. Male parent

Answers on page 13



Off trail snowshoeing is more tiring but very rewarding. /Photos by Rick Whitteker

Winter serenity

RICK WHITEKKER

Special to the Echo

Looking up at the faint halo filtering through the mid-altitude clouds, a light snow gently falls on my face like a cool mist of baby powder. The air is cold and still, the snow pristine and fluffy, a perfect day to strap on a pair of snowshoes and explore the forest trails at Glebe Park.

Moving amongst the snow-laden boughs and rolling terrain at Glebe Park, it is difficult to rush. The calmness of the landscape wills me to stop, take a deep breath and reflect on the natural beauty followed by a backwards flop, spread-eagle style, into the soft, down duvet of snow. Everyone enjoys the glory of deep, fresh snow in different ways!

Located at the top of Head Lake, northwest of Haliburton on Museum Road, the Glebe Park snowshoe trails are extensive and well marked. The trail head starts behind the Haliburton Highlands Museum and is easy to find. Soon greeted by a large trail map with "You Are Here" red star, this reassuring map with a different red star location pops up at various locations along the trail.

Meandering, dipping and climbing, the trail terrain mirrors the typical landscape of the Haliburton Highlands. Along the way I meet three other snowshoers, their smiles reaching their eyes confirming they were enjoying themselves as much as I am. These snowshoers were using ski poles, a good idea as they help on steeper terrain, add more stability and increase the upper body workout of this winter exercise.

And exercise it is. Snowshoeing burns the calories due to the extra weight on your feet, the slippery surface and the tendency to carry some extra snow on your shoes with every step. The great effort magnifier is if you are snowshoeing off the beaten track. It is much more tiring but a wonderful way to explore forested and wetland areas normally hard to access in the snow free seasons.

It is wise to snowshoe on colder days as the snow is lighter, the air feels fresher and you will want to keep moving to stay warm. I find nothing more endorphin inducing than outdoor winter exercise… that feeling of moving under your own power, the internal furnace slowly radiating heat to all extremities.

With about seven kilometers of trails, including the Sculpture Forest Trail across the road from the museum, the Glebe Park snowshoe trails have several loops giving options to visitors to find a route that matches their time and energy without needing to retrace their steps. All the trails are marked with different coloured paint matching the colours on the map making navigation easy.

I found the orange and blue loops to have a diverse mix of tree species. Yellow birches stand out like golden sentinels in a sea of foam. Dark-barked black cherry add contrast, but it is the eastern hemlock trees that really stand out.

Deep green and ladened with snow, some branches are bent over with enough weight to create tunnels and wind shelters to linger under. Snowshoers are not the only ones resting under these hemlocks. White-tailed deer use Glebe Park as a natural refuge browsing on hemlock twigs, a natural winter food unlike the garden variety food on the menu in the village. I even saw a large boulder with hoofprints up the side of it, suggesting some form of deer yoga. Cold, clean air can spark the human imagination!

Compared to hiking, snowshoeing allows more time to take in the surroundings while walking, like noticing the unique way that faint sunlight falls across smooth, blanketed surfaces creating subtle hues of colour. Polypores or bracket fungi hold the snow on the side of a dead tree like a stack of pancakes topped with whipped cream. Standing out in this white, leafless landscape are beech saplings with their crusty, brown leaves tenaciously clinging to smooth branches.

Minimal equipment, no lift ticket, trail pass or skill is required to snowshoe. Once you get accustomed to walking with big feet, it is easy to relax and enjoy your time on the trails. Just strap on the shoes and go… only you, the trail and fresh air, the perfect remedy to declutter and energize the mind and body during this season normally associated with southern migration or hunkering down indoors.

Snowshoes available to borrow

The Haliburton Highlands Museum has snowshoes to borrow. They have two different styles in all sizes, including snowshoes for children. The snowshoes are available any time the museum is open, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day except Mondays. Donations are appreciated.

Win secured

The Haliburton County Huskies left fans in awe after 6-0 win against against the Mississauga Chargers at the SG Nesbitt Memorial Arena. The game was the first shutout for for goalie Logan Kennedy. / TIM YANO Special to the *Echo*

WANTED

Historical photos from around Haliburton County

Preferably from before 1970

Help revive our *Pic of the Past* section by sending in your pictures. Bring them in to the Echo office at 146 Highland Street or email them to vivian@haliburtonpress.com with dates and any other information.

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County of Haliburton
2024 Budget Deliberations

The County of Haliburton wishes to provide PUBLIC NOTICE that Haliburton County Council will be holding further discussions on the 2024 budget at a special meeting of Council on Wednesday, March 6, 2024 at 1:00 pm in the County Council Chambers at 11 Newcastle Street, Minden, ON. The agenda for the above noted meeting date can be viewed online at http://haliburton.civicweb.net

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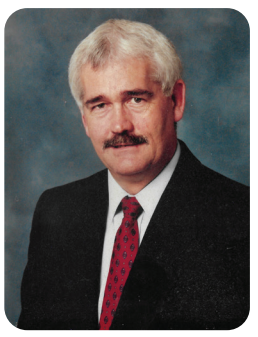

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The family of the late **Junior Barry** wants to thank our family and friends who were there for us. We extend our heartfelt thanks to the nurses and staff of Extendicare Haliburton for the 4 1/2 years of dedicated care who worked tirelessly looking after Junior. Also, we want to thank everyone for their prayers, cards, flowers, visits and donations to Extendicare, Lorraine's Florist for the beautiful arrangement, and Dollo's Foodland who provided the great lunch. Last but not least Monk's Funeral Home; Barry, Kirsten and Mac for all their expert service.

Thanks again,
Lois Ann & Family

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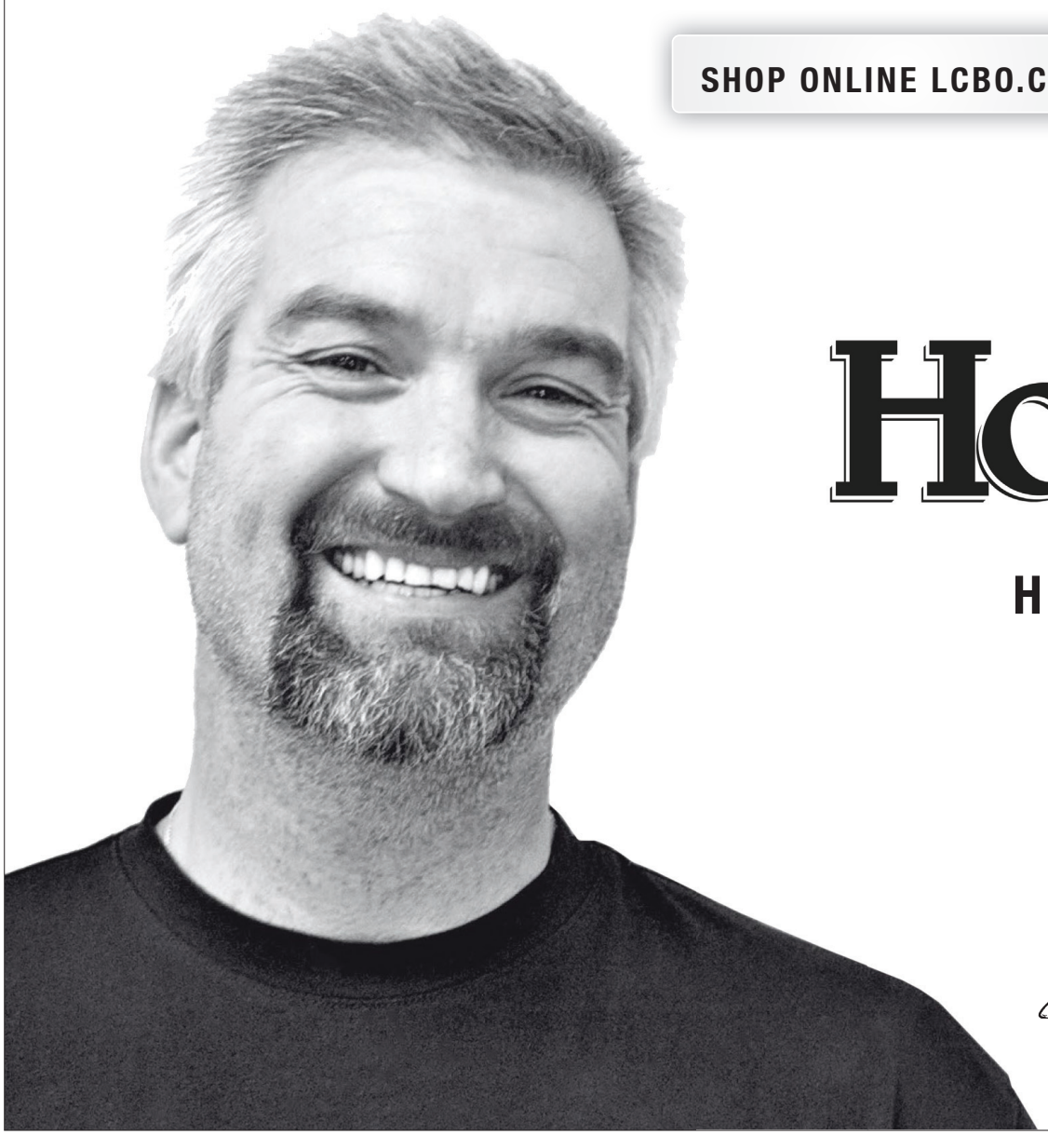

Hockley

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Andrew Kohnen
Brewmaster

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TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1998 Vol. 116, No. 1 • 32 PAGES 90 cents (incl. GST)

Loss of JK puts students "at risk" of having problems

by PETER DOWNS
Staff Reporter

The number of Kindergarten students "at risk" of having literacy and language problems has jumped since schools in Haliburton and Victoria Counties stopped offering Junior Kindergarten classes 18 months ago.

That's the conclusion of senior administrators at the newly amalgamated school board for Haliburton County, Muskoka and Victoria County.

At two of the six schools administrators studied, their findings show the percentage of students at risk more than tripled the year after JK was scrapped.

Trustees on the board are looking at resuming the program in Haliburton and Victoria Counties at the start of the coming school year, but have put their decision on hold until the province tells them how much operational funding the board will receive as of September.

Currently, JK is offered only at schools in Muskoka. The former boards in Haliburton and Victoria Counties got rid of the program as a cost-cutting measure at the beginning of the 1996-97 school year, when the provincial government cut funding for JK steeply.

Trustees in Victoria County — where JK had been running since 1986 and was widely supported by parents — made the decision reluctantly.

In Haliburton County — where many parents and trustees fought against offering the NDP-mandated program — the program was chopped with less regret.

While opponents didn't dispute the educational benefits of children starting school at a younger age, they didn't like the long hours three- and four-year-old children had to spend on the bus because of the county's vast size.

But preliminary local research indicates those long bus rides may be worthwhile for the sake of the children's education.

"We have indications that the number of students at risk (of literacy and language difficulty in Kindergarten) in Victoria County and Haliburton County has increased since Junior Kindergarten was stopped," Larry Archibald, the board's superintendent of schools and elementary operations told trustees at a meeting last week.

Archibald cited a report examining student performance at six

See PARENTS page 4

WINTER BLUES ARE THROWN FOR A LOOP

Jesse Quibell, Erin Deschamps (hidden) and Erika Howe were three of the participants in the weekend's Loop Carnival in the Wilberforce/Harcourt area, organized by the business owners association. For more photos and information on events, see page 24.

New primary school may soon go to tender

by PETER DOWNS
Staff Reporter

School board administrators are expected to get the green light next week to tender construction of the new primary school planned for Haliburton.

On Tuesday evening trustees on the board's committee of the whole approved final working drawings for Stuart Baker Elementary School, an 11-classroom building that will replace aging Victoria Street Elementary School.

All nine of the board's trustees sit on the committee so it's anticipated the board will also endorse the $2.3-million plans at its meeting Feb. 24.

Jim Bradley, the board's superintendent of plant and transportation, ran through the long history behind the replacement proposal for trustees, explaining that it was put on hold for a year by a provincial building freeze.

Haliburton trustee and board chair Cheryl Murdoch said "it's imperative" to get on with the construction project because of safety deficiencies at 75-year-old VSS.

"If there were a fire in this building we would be hard pressed to say (the students) would all be okay," she said.

Muskoka trustee Roger Chamberlain said he's concerned by the amount of debt the newly amalgamated board is taking on to help pay for the primary school and upgrade work at Haliburton's high school.

The provincial government has agreed to put $1.4-million toward the $6-million high school renovation and $425,000 toward the $2.3-million primary school.

The former Haliburton school board also has roughly $620,000 in a reserve fund dedicated to the new school construction.

That leaves the amalgamated board on the hook for a combined debenture of nearly $5.86-million.

Chamberlain said he isn't happy to see the new board starting out with such a high debt load.

"That takes money out of the school system," he said.

Al Ingram, superintendent of finance, said the board is now carrying annual debenture repayment charges of about $3.5-million.

He said a portion of the money the provincial government will give boards through its much-awaited funding formula will be designated for capital projects, "but we don't know what those figures will be."

Trustees are also recommending that the board approve working drawings for a $2.8-million renovation at Muskoka Lakes Secondary School and authorize administrators to tender the construction.

No debenture will be required for the work and the province is not providing any money towards it.

The work is to be paid for through the former Muskoka school board's existing capital reserves.

PRICE: 84 cents plus GST = 90 cents

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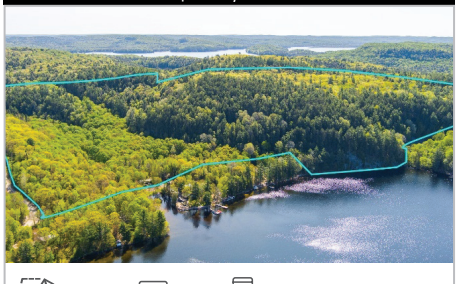

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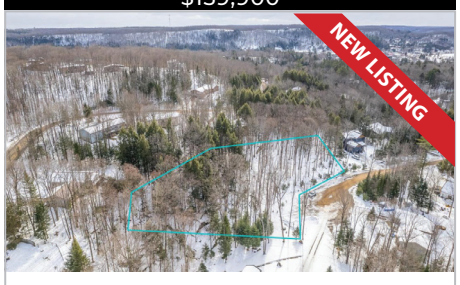

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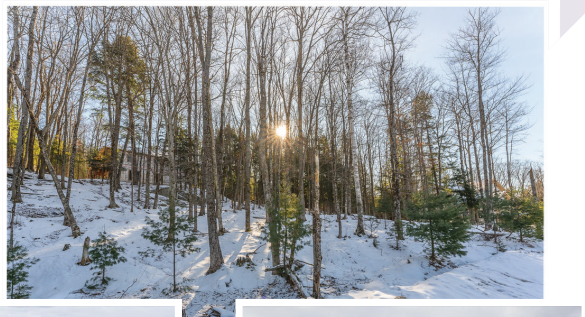

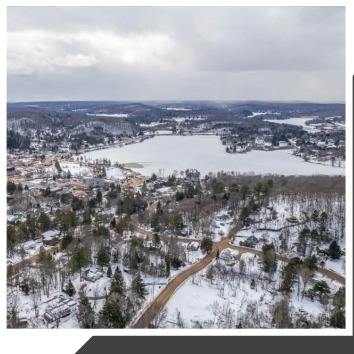

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